The only one by bloomingxflame

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)
Genre: F/M, Fluff, Innocent, Mileven, smol beans
Language: English
Characters: Dustin Henderson, Eleven (Stranger Things), Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Karen Wheeler, Lucas Sinclair, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington, Ted Wheeler, Troy (Stranger Things), Will Byers
Relationships: Eleven & Mike Wheeler, Jonathan Byers/Nancy Wheeler, Joyce Byers & Jim "Chief" Hopper
Status: In-Progress
Published: 2016-12-16
Updated: 2017-01-10
Packaged: 2022-04-02 00:21:10
Rating: Not Rated
Warnings: Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Chapters: 7
Words: 5,917
Publisher: archiveofourown.org
Summary:

Eleven finds herself finally living the life she's always wanted. Endless Eggos, forts, and cuddles from Mike. But will she be able to control her emotions and powers she's been hiding deep down, or most importantly, the contrasting feelings she's developing for Mike?

1. Chapter 1

Author's Note:

- Inspired by Eleven & Company by solangewrites.

Pitch Black. Colorless. Lifeless. Swallowed by the ebony abyss of the shadows. She was engulfed by darkness, every nerve in her body strangled with fear. The only thing she could feel was the frigid water beneath her feet, stinging with salt. Faint roars grumbled in the distance and every inch of her body trembled with a mix of isolation and terror.

The small girl awoke, bolting upright. Cold beads of sweat gathered on the small of her back. She was shivering but her limbs were on fire.

It was going to be okay. What did Mike always tell her? That these were just….dreams. They weren't real. She took in her surroundings, grounding her. The familiar smell of diluted mothballs, mixed with the musty air of the basement. The silky feeling of Mike's old sleeping bag. The blankets cascading over chairs, protecting her. Just a dream. She heard the light flicker on.

"El?" Mike called out, his voice raspy with exhaustion. "El, are you okay?"

He stumbled over to the makeshift fort and lifted the blankets sheltering Eleven. Her cheeks were stained with tears and her bottom lip was trembling.

"W-What happened? What's wrong?" His face shifted in concern, and he reached out a hand, gently touching her arm. Heat radiated off of him.

"Night Scare. Dream." El could hear her voice catch on the last word, still shaken up by the encounter. This has been happening for the past few months, ever since Mike convinced her that they were going to live a normal life.

"We know those aren't real. Remember what I told you? I will protect you, for as long as I live." He pulled her in to a warm hug, and his eyelashes brushed against her cheeks. "I promise."

He smelled of lemongrass and damp wood, a smell that Eleven loved. She wiped the tears away on his shoulder, feeling her stomach flip at his embrace. They pulled away and lay together, Mike's arm draped

over her shoulders. the warmth tingled, spread through out her entire body. Her head felt light and careless, taking in all of his beauty. She grew tired, counting the spray of freckles along his face, a world full of stars, all for her. She fell asleep wrapped in his arms, finally safe.

_____

“Kids! Breakfast!” Mrs. Wheeler made her morning route, waking all of the kids for the meal. Eleven cracked her eyes open, drooping with sleepiness. Karen’s singsong voice rang in her ears, and she rubbed her eyes, squeaking with a yawn.
She glanced over at Mike, his hair a mess of curls toppled over one another. She giggled, feeling the same dizziness in her head and butterflies in her stomach. Her laughter woke him with a start.
“Morning,” He grumbled, trying his best to sound cheery for El.
“Breakfast.” She tugged at his arm, almost ripping it from the socket. She couldn’t wait to dig into the smell that was permeating through the basement.
Mike rolled over and ran his hand through his hair, trying to tame the mess.
“Give me a second.”
“One.” El counted, giggling more.
“Okay, give me five.”
“One, two-“ She started, but was interrupted by a playful pinch in the arm. She gave up, and walked up the steep stairs, emerging into the kitchen, and greeting everyone. Mrs. Wheeler had displayed her iconic blueberry waffles, stacked upon one another, drizzled with syrup. El could feel her stomach rumble, and a growing pain to blossom. She looked down in concern, and Nancy let out a laugh.
“It just means you’re hungry. Dig in.” She piled the small cakes onto El’s plate and poured her a glass of milk. El waited for Mike to emerge before she started eating, and as soon as he fell into his seat, she devoured everything.
She could feel Mike’s smile burn into the back of her head, and she glanced up at him. She didn’t know why he was looking for so long. Did she do something wrong? She felt herself uncomfortably squirm in her seat, trying to smooth down her dress. “Bad?” She could hear

the lilt of concern creep into her voice.
“No. Pretty.”
She felt a smile force its way on to her mouth. Her cheeks tinged pink and her stomach felt fluttery and like it was tying itself in knots.
It is him, purely him. Mike Wheeler. The only one that would call El pretty as she was shoveling immense amounts of food into her mouth. The only one that would fall asleep, his arms tangled around her. The only one that would protect her. Mike Wheeler. The one for her.

2. (Mike)

“Mike! Are you ready for school?” His mom called out, directed towards the basement.
“Coming!” He yelled back, his hands jittery with anticipation. He struggled to tie El’s gift onto the lamp hidden in her bed fort. A dream catcher. He spent hours the night before making sure everything was perfect. The embroidered beads her favorite color, and the elegant black feathers dangling beautifully from the twine. He let out a sigh of relief, knowing that she would love it.
“Don’t want to be late for El’s first day of school!” His mother teased, singing the last syllable. He felt the familiar blush creep up to his cheeks, accompanied by the antsy feeling in his fingertips. El’s first day. It had to go perfectly, like everything else. He couldn’t let her see how he was normally treated, and he couldn’t let her be treated that way. Most importantly, she had to have a good time. He knew he was setting the expectations too high, but it was El. He had to.
“Michael!” His mom was getting irritated now, and he knew he had to go. He smoothed out his hair one final time, slung his backpack over his shoulders, and darted upstairs. Eleven was waiting for him by the door, wearing the blue collared dress that he loved. He liked how it flowed around her arms. It made her look like an angel- free, sweet, beautiful. Mike was careful not to stare for too long, he knew it made her fidget.
“Are you excited?” He pressed, walking closer, slipping his hand into hers. She cocked her head to the side, furrowing her brows together.
“Happy,” he searched for the right explanation for the confused girl. “Looking forward to be there.”
The sides of her lips curled upwards, and she nodded her head, squeezing his hand. His pulse quickened, and they stepped out of the door, meeting Lucas, Dustin, and Will in the driveway.
“It’s about time..” Dustin trailed off, his lisp catching each word.
Will stood there quietly, fidgeting with his hair.
“How long does it take to roll out of bed and put on some clothes?” Lucas tapped his foot impatiently, ready for the day. Both of the boys’ eyes flickered downwards, towards El and Mike’s hands intertwined. Mike could feel his face grow hot.
“Lets go to school.”
“Oh shall we?” Dustin smirked and Mike could feel the tension

between them. “C’mon, Mr. Clarke says he has a surprise waiting.”
Mike breathed deeply, scuffing his shoes on the gravel walkway. “Alright, lets go.”

———————

The walk there was short, as expected. El was so close that he swore he could feel her heartbeat, and his palms grew sweaty. “Ready?” He directed his voice towards El who was giggling at something Lucas uttered.
Her eyes sparkled, and her skin glowed a soft golden. “Ready.”
All 5 of them walked into the building, the familiar smell of printed paper and dust stinging their noses. Mike felt a familiar pain bloom in his stomach, an anxious nausea building up. He held El closer, pointing to all of his favorite posters on the walls. Promotion for the AV club scattered the school, brightening the boys’ faces.
“Eleven should join the AV club!” Dustin offered. The other boys nodded.
“We can show her all of the cool things we’ve learned!” Added Will.
“And we can show her that the radio is fun. That it’s not only for contacting people in the Upside down.” Lucas jumped in, getting as excited as the rest. El and Lucas have grown and bonded, but there will always be a gap in between them. They’ve been working on closing it, but things have been done that can’t be patched.
Mike found comfort in the endless laughter and chimes of conversation between his friends. The sickening feeling in his stomach grew, and suddenly everything stopped, time began to move in slow motion. He felt an icy finger jab into his shoulder blade, shoving him forward. He instinctively squeezed El’s hand.
The others turned in unison, staring up at Troy, who hasn’t been afraid to endlessly taunt them. He could feel El shudder beneath him, and he held her close, trying to ground her.
“What do you want?” Lucas spat at him. His eyes drooped downwards, and his body shifted into a fighting stance.
“I want to know how you idiots got the fairy back.” He flicked Will in the forehead, who whimpered and shrank down. Troy smirked, and his bare teeth resembled a wild dog, hunting for pray.

Everyone stared down at the floor, and it was so quiet Mike could hear his blood rushing through his veins. He felt a hot tear splash onto his wrist, and saw El's eyes welling up, a glassy sea of frustration.

Anger rushed over him and he stepped forward, releasing El's hand. He suddenly felt cold, empty. But before he could make a move, he could feel Troy's hands clutching his jacket, shoving him backwards into a locker. His back ached and his head hit the wall with a dull bang. His hair fell into his eyes and he no longer felt any strength to stand up to him. Dustin tried to pull him off, but it was no use.

"How did you do it?" Troy was inches away from his face, and his hot breath smelled rancid. Mike fought back the lump forming in his throat.

"I said HOW Frogface!" He shook him against the wall, rattling every part of Mike's body.

It seemed to take months before he was released. All of his senses were numbed and he felt useless. Such a waste of it. What he didn't want El to see.

Then suddenly, he was freed, and Troy was thrown to the ground. His shoulders ached with lingering pain and his cheeks were hot with anger. Troy got up and shoved his way through the crowd that formed around them, huffing in defeat.

"We protect each other, Mike." El pulled him into a hug, and her heartbeat helped slow his. "Until the day I die, I will protect you. Promise."

Mike felt the world around him spinning in warmth, and the pain in his head subdued.

"Of course El." He said, his voice barely a whisper, but more sure than he has ever been in his life. He was the one for her and she was the one for him.

Notes for the Chapter:

> Second chapter finished! Thank you for all of your support, I have big plans for this story!

3. (Mike)

Notes for the Chapter:

> Hey everyone! I am so sorry for not being able to update as frequently as I hoped, and for the short chapter. Sorry to keep you waiting! The holidays have been pretty hectic and I've been scrambling to get everything done before the new year. I hope you guys had a wonderful Christmas or whatever holiday you celebrated. I will try to update on a schedule soon. Leave some comments, ideas, or thoughts down below!
>
> Thanks for reading

“El, I’m fine.” Mike reassured the girl for what felt like the hundredth time. She sat next to him on the couch, and wouldn’t stop staring at him like he was an abandoned puppy.
“Your back..” El started, for the hundred and first time. She grazed his lower back lightly, and he tried not to wince as she pressed on the bruise.
“Are you sure you’re going to be okay dude?” Dustin managed to muster through a mouthful of Nilla wafers.
“Yeah, man. You took a big hit there.” Lucas was sitting on the chair across from him, antsy with left over anger from a few hours before. They all had been shaken up, and Mike could see the newfound gratitude in Will’s eyes when he looked up at him. El grabbed Mike’s hand.
“Friends don’t lie.” She reminded him. But this time, it didn’t seem repetitive. He cupped her small face in his hand, and pressed his lips onto hers. The best form of reassurance. All of his pain melted away and grew in his stomach in the form of butterflies. And something else. Yearn. He deepened the kiss and let the world slip away from him, engulfed in only El and the sweet taste of her strawberry lip balm.
“Mike,” She mumbled against his lips, snapping him back into the world. Into the basement. Around his friends.
“Forget we were here?” Lucas waved his hand back and forth. “Earth

to Mike- get a room!"
He pulled away, wiping his hands on his pants. He could feel heat creep up his neck and just knew he was turning the perfect shade of red.
"Ha ha, very funny." His voice was still wobbly with the aftermath of the kiss and he was still overwhelmed by the sensation of wanting something deeper. He locked eyes with El, and knew she felt the same. She smoothed away a stray baby hair that had fallen onto her forehead.
Luckily, he was saved by the embarrassment (maybe a little too late) by his mom, calling the kids up for dinner.
They all thundered up the stairs and took their seats, including a small corkscrew stool placed beside Mike's chair. El thought it was the perfect place to sit, and no one could take it away from her. Dustin tried once, but quickly decided it was a bad idea when El bounded into the kitchen.
Nancy took her usual seat next to Steve, who Mike wasn't that fond of. Everything had changed since the discovery of the upside down, but they still knew him as the town's douchebag, Steve Harrington.
Mike's mom walked into the kitchen with a platter of multicolored carrots, and her most famous and well- known food, meatloaf. The smell permeated through the house and El licked her lips, remembering it as her first real home cooked meal. Mike smiled at this thought. He loved seeing her happy.
"Now, kids, we're going to try something new." Karen started, making her kids groan in unison. Even Lucas, Dustin, and Will rolled their eyes along, always dragged into these family meetings.
"Not you three," she chuckled, "or you Steve." She gestured to the boy to the right of Nancy, who sighed in relief. He also knew what these family meetings could ensue. Mrs. Wheeler wasn't always the greatest brainstormer.
"So, after everything that has happened, your father and I," she shot a worried look at her husband, who was obviously zoned out, only focusing on his meatloaf and the newspaper held in front of him. "We are going to start family counseling, every Monday night."
Mike grabbed El's hand in instinct. He could feel his stomach nearly implode on itself, and words came tumbling out of his mouth a mile a minute.
"But Mom!" He glanced at Nancy for backup, who was already nodding her head in agreement. "AV Club meetings are held on

Monday! It's the only extra curricular activity I'm involved in. El was about to join."

"I guess El will have to join without you. You see your friends every day anyways. We need to grow closer as a family. End of discussion."

Mike brought his elbows down on the table, resting his face in his hands. He couldn't believe something so important to him was being taken away. He couldn't explain what he felt to his mom. That through all of the madness in his life, science and AV club was the only thing that grounded him. He felt a small hand rub across his back. He gave El an appreciative smile.

The other boys didn't do anything but stare down at the table. The only sounds for the rest of the dinner were simply the clattering of silverware on plates. This was going to be a long week.

4. (El)

Notes for the Chapter:

> Hey everyone! I Once again I am sorry for the scattered updating schedule. I plan to be updating much more frequently when everything gets settled. This chapter is focusing more on the sisterly relationship between nancy and El. Have a very Happy New Year! See you in 2017!

The young girl lightly fidgeted with the dreamcatcher that Mike had made her. Playing with it caused her insides to feel all warm and fuzzy. She wasn't sure what it meant.

Taking her hands off of the tangled feathers, she started to smooth down her sleeping bag, a nervous tendency. It was Monday night, and El had refused to go to the Av club without Mike. When he wasn't around, she felt a hollow feeling, like the warmth from earlier was ripped away from her. She wasn't very good at emotions, but she knew that since the family counseling has started, Mike seemed sad. This made the hollow feeling grow.

His face always lit up when he saw her though. She knew this meant something good. When they would see each other during health, all of her worries would melt away into a smile on her face. She felt the same feeling as she heard the doorknob on the front door jiggle. Dashing up the stairs, she greeted Mike at the door with the biggest beam that she could muster. He didn't return it. He kept his hands in his pockets and pushed past her into the basement. She could feel her face drop. Did she do something wrong? Was he mad? Familiar stress bubbled up in her stomach and tears welled at the brim of her eyes. He always yelled at her when she did something wrong, when he was really mad. But she didn't know what to think now. She wasn't good with emotions or mental stuff yet. Health had just started, and they were learning about healthy relationships, about love.

She knew at that moment, sitting in the wooden chair at school, that she loved Mike. She would do anything for him, and he would do anything for her. When they kissed, it felt like a million sparks flying between their lips. When they hugged, her mind would be clouded with a blurry fuzz that made her feel so happy.

All of that was gone now. She was so confused.
“He’s mad at me.” The older girl standing in front of her said. Nancy, Mike’s sister. El never felt a strong connection with her as a sister, but they never really got to spend any time getting to know each other. “He's not mad at you.” Nancy could tell that El was taken aback by the sudden shift in Mike’s attitude. “During family counseling, he was really upset about the Av club. He was worried about the competition coming up, you know, nerdy stuff.”
El was finding a hard time understanding the tone in Nancy’s voice, but she nodded anyway. “Nerdy stuff.”
“Yea,” The older girl pulled out a chair and sat in front of El. “Well, I insulted him about it. And he can get pretty sensitive about these things, so he unleashed his newfound teenage language on me, and Mom wasn’t having it. She grounded him.”
“Ground-ed?” El pressed, addled by the new word.
“It means he’s in trouble. He’s not allowed to do the things he’s normally allowed to. Like see his friends, or go biking.”
“Oh.” El sighed, all of the anxiety releasing from her system. She felt sad for Mike, knowing how it feels to be lonely. Isolated. “I’ll go see.” She started down the stairs, but Nancy grabbed her arm, gently stopping her. El twisted, trying to escape her grasp.
“You might not want to see him like this. He gets a little wound up. Hormones.” She chuckled.
El stirred at the new word. She recognized it from health. She started to ask Nancy what it meant, but ignored it, wanting to go see Mike. She nodded. “I know. I love Mike.” The world felt weird on her tongue, trying it out for the first time.
She watched as the girl in front of her shot her eyebrows up. “Those are a different kind of hormones. Maybe we need to have a little talk.”
The younger girl scoffed. She didn’t want a conversation right now. If this is what sisters are always like, El wasn’t sure that she wanted one.
“You’re a teenager now, which means that your mindset can change easily. You’re starting to find things that you like, and these things include Mike.”
El stopped struggling against her hold.
“And when you like someone like that, these feelings can get pretty intense. You’ve learned the word ‘love’ in health, right?”
El nodded slowly.

“Good. So you know that when you love someone, you share everything with them, things that other people aren’t allowed to see.” She poked El softly in the stomach, causing her to giggle. “Parts of you that you can give only to someone you really love. This person is very special.”
She took in all of this new information with a deeper understanding. “Why aren’t other people allowed to see the things that Mike can see?” El asked innocently.
“That’s a talk for another time. Mike can’t see those things yet, you’re too young.” Nancy replied. El blushed, frustrated that she couldn’t understand these things.
“But you said people that I love can see these things. I love Mike.” The word started to feel more comfortable in El's mouth.
“Why don’t we finish this talk in my room. Where we can have a little privacy. I will tell you anything you want. I will be here for anything you need.”
“Ok, thank you.” El felt the familiar fuzzy feeling in her stomach crawl back, but in a different way. Maybe this is what it feels like to have a sister. “Can I go see Mike first?”
“If you want to.” Nancy smiled at her, baffled by how strong young love could be. “If you promise not to do anything you’re not supposed to.”
“I promise.” It felt weird for El to say this word to someone else, but she liked being able to have someone to talk to. “I will not show Mike anything of mine that he’s not supposed to see.”
“Good girl.” Nancy smirked, shooing her down the basement steps.

5. (Mike)

Notes for the Chapter:

> Hello! Sorry this chapter is a little short, I've been working on some art entries for school. A few of them are stranger things related,and I am so excited! What are your guys' new years resolutions? I hope you're having a wonderful 2017. See you next update!

Mike heard the familiar footsteps of El bound down the stairs. Part of him relaxed in relief that it's not his mom or his sister, but the other part wanted to be left alone to sulk. He couldn't tell El that. He already felt bad for ignoring her when he walked into the house. So he just sunk farther into the sofa cushion, waiting for her to crawl up to him.

To his surprise, she didn't say anything. She just sat quietly next to him and copied his fidgeting with his fingers. He slipped his hands underneath himself.

"How.." El bit her bottom lip, trying to figure out what to say. Most of Mike's anguish washed away. She looked so adorable when she did that. "How do you feel?" She scooted a bit closer. He could feel the heat radiating off of her body.

"I'm okay." Mike darted his eyes downwards as she tried to catch his gaze. His cheeks burned with anger but his stomach gnawed with guilt. He should tell El everything, but he wanted to shield her from the bad in the world.

El poked the prominent freckle on the tip of his nose. "Friends don't lie."

"Okay." Mike threw his head backwards and sighed. It felt weird talking about his feelings. He was only used to ranting to his guy friends. It was different with El. He felt like he had to be more sensitive. "I just, feel different lately. More set on edge. It's weird."

El nodded. "Hormones."

"What!?"

"Hormones. You're acting weird now because of them." She blinked at him innocently. "Nancy told me."

He sighed even heavier than before. First, Nancy was screwing with

his life by siding with his mom, and now she was telling El all of this? Shielding her would be harder than he thought. He could still hear El talking softly, so he tuned back in.

“She also told me that I have these things too, these hormones, but differently. She says I’m not allowed to show you certain things of mine. She says we’re not old enough. She says we’re too young.”

He could feel the pink heat on his face spread to the tips of his ears. He had an idea that Nancy knew exactly what she was doing by telling her all of this.

How is El supposed to know that this isn’t something that you casually talk about? At sleepovers with her friends, sure. But not to Mike. He barely could control his own emotions, let alone worry about El’s.

“We are too young.” He managed to squeak out. “It’s very personal.”

He could see the girl’s head tilt in confusion.

“Isn’t kissing personal?” When Mike didn’t reply, she frowned in concern. “That’s what you called it, right? When you pressed your mouth against mine? You said it was special. That you liked me more than a friend.” She pushed.

“No no no, of course I do. I like you El. A lot.” He didn’t know how to save this. He was digging a screwed hole with no return. “It’s just different. More personal I guess. It’s the next level.”

El’s mouth twisted as she was trying to form her words. Then her whole face went blank, only lit up by a smile. “Show me.”

The girl wrapped her hands around Mike’s face, pulling him closer. He could almost feel the warmth of it. He felt the familiar taste of her strawberry lip balm and started to breathe heavier. This was El. He couldn’t let anything bad happen to her. She was innocent, she didn’t know how to handle the world around her. She had no idea what was going on right now, and how wrong it was.

He pulled her wrists gently away from his face, panting. “Not now, I can’t tell you.”

She let out a small “hmph” and plopped back down onto the couch. “You have things you can’t show me, either. I understand.”

Mike internally sighed in relief. They were 14 years old, and Nancy was already getting her caught up in this crap. he made a mental note to remind her of how naïve El really was. “I’m sorry,” He huffed, giving her a small smile. “Maybe we can talk about something else.”

He was cut off by his mom impatiently calling him upstairs for dinner. He frowned and told her he would be upstairs in a minute.

“Maybe some other time.” El gave him a small smile.
They stared at each other for a while, in complete silence. The air around them hung loosely and cloudy, like they were floating. The non-spoken words were sweet and warm. Her eyes sparkled like sugar crystals and her cheeks glowed like rose. El counted Mike’s light spray of freckles, admiring them like stars in a midnight sky.
Mike was snapped out of his daze by a small voice, barely there. Four words, escaping El’s strawberry lips, a sudden jolt to his reality.
“I love you Mike Wheeler.”
The words felt unfamiliar and strange to his ears, but even more strange tumbling out of his mouth, with no hesitation.
“I love you too.”

6. (El)

Notes for the Chapter:

> Hey guys! I hope you like this update, it's a little twist in the story line. We'll be back to fluff soon enough ;) Happy Wednesday!

Chapter 6: El

When El opened her eyes, she felt like she was drowning, floating about in frostbitten water. Her lungs felt like they were collapsing under the weight of metal, crushing down, making her breaths short and shallow. She was alone, in pitch blackness, feeling her own mind implode on itself, burning into her brain. Her screams weren't heard, her pounding on the walls of the tank made no sound. A white glimpse of Papa's hair reflected off the blinding light from above as he slid back the covering. A face that used to bring her comfort, distorted and twisted into something evil. Bad man. El squeezed her eyes shut, every thread of her body screaming and tearing apart.

Screaming, she awoke, hair matted down with sweat and cheeks sticky with tears. She was no longer comforted by the darkness or the silky feeling of Mike's sleeping bag. El curled her knees to her chest, compressing her lungs. She drew long breaths, trembling with fear.

"Bad men, bad men.." she whispered to herself softly, rocking back and forth. It had been at least 5 days since she'd had a nightmare, and she thought they would go away. The black around her seemed to swallow her whole. She felt more frightened in this dingy basement than she had in the dream.

Dream. That is what Mike had called them, and she believed him. He had made her the dream catcher. It was supposed to fight the bad dreams away, but now she came to the realization that maybe they weren't dreams. What was that other word that Papa had taught her? It was when she was alone in those tanks, or when she was wired and hooked up. He called them visions.

A cold chill shot down her spine despite the sweat gathering on her back. The rocking did nothing to calm her down. She began to tremble.

Visions. The experience of seeing something foretold to happen. She

had awoken with the same stinging pain in the pit of her stomach, the dull anguish in her eyes, and the constant discomfort in the crook of her neck. The same feelings that she had when she used her powers. When she killed the bad men, before she collapsed.

No one in the house had heard her scream, and she was alone. Not even Mike woke up from his heavy sleep. The only sound in the house was El's pounding heart beat, and a low rumble from outside, the low rumble of engines.

The next moments happened in a white hot flash. The basement doorknob jiggled, and the familiar frustrated grunts sounded from the other side. Papa.

El focused on locking the doorknob, and levitating a chair, jamming it underneath. The tremors in her hands grew along with the shakiness of her breaths.

On her tiptoes, she scrambled up the stairs and searched frantically for the steps leading to Mike's room. When she flicked on the light, and shook him awake, her cheeks were already stained with tears.

"Mike…Something's wrong.. Dream."

"El?" He shook the hair nested around his eyes. They drooped heavily with sleep, and he was sprawled out on his bed, a contrast to the fetal position in which El sleeps. She shook him once again. "El, what's wrong? Whats wrong?"

She could see his face drain of color, his eyes pool with worry and fear. She was scaring him, but he should be scared. The fear, and the thick tension suffocated them.

"What is wrong?" Mike was sitting upright now, grabbing onto her hands, steadying the constant shaking. "You can tell me."

El looked him straight in the eye. The dark brown sea of his iris swirled and burned in his fan light. Her voice was wobbly, knowing that something was wrong. The feeling was back, her uncontrolled powers. She felt like she was going to collapse, and she could feel the warm trickle of blood trail from her nose. A force inhuman slammed Mike's door shut and she locked it, just like when she first met Lucas. El's voice caught on the lump in her throat.

"Bad men."

7. (Mike)

Notes for the Chapter:

> Hey guys! Sorry for the long wait, I was taking a little break to refresh my mind and get my ideas sorted out. I have big plans as of now and I hope you guys are continuing to enjoy this story! More fluff and longer chapters coming soon!

Mike could feel his heart drop to his stomach, along with the color in his face. His hands began the quick judder that starts when he's anxious. The girl across from him was staring blankly, overflowing with terror. He was getting to that point.

"What about the bad men? Are you sure?" He frantically searches her eyes for any sliver of hope that this was just a dream. That she simply was confused, but she found none. "El. Eleven." The boy now had his hands on her shoulders, shaking her gently. His voice squeaked.

Eleven's eyes were glassy with panic and alarm. Her voice was quiet and raspy, similar to when the boys first found her. It made Mike's stomach twist in an unpleasant knot.

"They're…." El managed to mumble. Her nose was caked with dry blood and the skin around her eyes was turning translucent, revealing the veins darkening by the second. Mike's fingertips lost feeling and his body went numb as the dim whiz of engines sounded in his ears. El mumbled something else, so quiet it sent chills down his spine, a contrast to the nervous sweat forming there.

"They're here."

———

The entire atmosphere shifted, like an alarm started blaring through his house. They were moving quickly, but quietly, and trying hard to keep their voices down.

“Answer…..Answer…” Mike silently chanted, clutching the hand radio in his hand. He had grabbed it from under his bed as an instinct, trying to get ahold of Lucas. Even if the bad men weren’t after him and the others, he had to make sure that they were safe.

El placed her hand on Mike’s leg, constantly bouncing up and down with impatience. He gave her a look of concern, but trying his best to play it off, not wanting to scare her anymore.

“Wait for Lucas to answer, we can’t waste anytime.” Getting off of the bed, he slammed his window down, the cool night air spilling into the room. “I’m going to check if we can make it out of the house.”

The cool breeze whistled through his thick hair. He leaned over the edge, peering past the roof into the direction that the engines were coming from. He caught a glimpse of white reflecting the moonlight. It was jiggling the doorknob to the basement.

“He-Hello?” A broken voice emerged from the intercom. Lucas’ voice was tired, thick with rasp.

“Lucas!” Mike rushed back over to El, leaving the window open, to let out the hot tension that has been building up in the room. “Lucas! Lucas! Listen to me carefully,” he remembered that his voice needed to be low. “They’re here. They’re back. The bad men.”

“Wait wha-“

“Lucas, we don’t have time. They know she’s here. Contact Dustin and Will and meet us on the corner by Murkwood. Hurry!” Mike shoved the antenna back into the radio, and led El over to the window. Looking down, he swallowed, the saliva catching on the dryness of his throat. He let out a choke.

El burned her stare into his face, taking in all of his features. It’s something you do when you know you’re in danger. Try to ground yourself. She took in the lamp shining behind his curls, a golden halo. The twinges of deep brown swirling in his eyes, his stark freckles dancing along the bridge of his nose to his dimples. She wondered if this is what it felt like to have your life flash before your eyes.

“El, are you okay?” Mike broke El out of her trance. He felt nausea bury itself at the pit of his stomach, mottled with fear. He took her hand in his, and glanced at the roof. His bike was lying carelessly on the sidewalk below.

El was standing there, and he swore he could hear her heartbeat, feel it like it was his own. He had no way of knowing if she was ready or not. Of course he himself wanted to assume fetal position and hide, curling up in his comforter in a corner. Still, something in his veins

was pulsing, slowly but surely. Hope. Dignity. Love.
It was now or never, and he was not leaving El behind.

Author's Note:

> Hope you guys liked the first chapter! Definitely more to come, if it's something worthwhile. Thanks for all of your feedback!